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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
THURSDAY, MAY 27, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS

Erdogan invited to G-8 as 'Democratic partner' - Sabah
Erdogan to attend 'Summit of the Giants' - Hurriyet
Paritzky: Erdogan right to criticize Israeli operations - Sabah
Turkey pressures Israel - Turkiye
130 killed in Iraq - Turkiye
Zarkawi's head worth \$25 million - Aksam
Amnesty report accuses US -Aksam
US expects another terror attack before 9/11/04 - Milliyet

OPINION MAKERS

Bush invites Erdogan to G-8 - Radikal
Powell: US won't leave command of Iraqi forces - Radikal
US, UK disagree over command of coalition forces - Cumhuriyet
Turkish-Israeli tension growing - Birgun
Anti-Saddam scientist new PM for Iraq - Zaman
Shiite PM for Iraq - Yeni Safak
Amnesty Int.: US has made world a more dangerous place - Zaman
Gallup: 69 percent of Iraqis find cooperation with US dangerous - Yeni Safak
Al Gore: Worse days await US in Iraq - Yeni Safak
Turkey may withdraw ambassador to Israel - Yeni Safak
Washington expects a new 9/11 - Birgun
TRT pushes button for Kurdish broadcasts - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

PM Erdogan to attend June G-8 Summit: PM Erdogan has been invited by President Bush to the G-8 Summit in Sea Island, Georgia as a 'democratic partner.' Erdogan will address the summit as the leader of a democratic secular Muslim country - a model for the Islamic world. Some Arab leaders had also been invited to the summit, but they declined the invitation in reaction to recent events in Iraq and Palestine.

Ankara may upgrade representation in Palestine: FM Abdullah Gul said that Turkey might follow some European countries by sending a diplomat of ambassadorial rank to head the Turkish Consulate in Jerusalem. Turkish Consul-General Huseyin Avni Bicakci's term will end soon, and he may be replaced by an ambassador in September 2004. Gul also signaled that Turkey's ambassador to Israel might be summoned to Ankara for consultations. Such moves would force Israel to review bilateral relations with Turkey, Israeli diplomatic sources told "Radikal." They added that the Jewish lobby in the US could withdraw support for Turkey. Ankara may respond by reviewing defense contracts with Israel, and by closing Turkish airspace to Israeli warplanes for training exercises, dailies report.

Israel's Paritzky on Palestine, Syria: PM Erdogan has renewed offers to mediate between Israel and both the Palestinians and Syria, Israeli Infrastructure Minister Josef Paritzky said on Tuesday. Speaking after his meeting with Erdogan in Ankara, Paritzky said the Turkish leader had been forthright in his criticism of Israel's assassination of two Hamas leaders and the recent raid on the Rafah

refugee camp in Gaza. Paritzky said Erdogan had also conveyed the message that Syria's President Bashar Assad wants peace with Israel. The Israeli minister said Syria would have to do more to show it was serious about peace before Israel was convinced to restart talks. "If President Assad is willing to go into a long, hard process to negotiate for peace, he will find the Israelis to be willing partners," Paritzky said.

TRT agrees to broadcasts in Kurdish: The executive board of TRT, Turkey's state broadcaster, has decided to give a green light to broadcasts in languages other than Turkish. TRT is facing heavy pressure from the MFA to allow Kurdish language broadcasts to begin. TRT General Director Senol Demiroz said that there is 'no legal obstacle' to prevent broadcasts in Kurdish, and added that Kurdish broadcasts would begin soon.

Ongoing trouble in implementation of EU laws: The implementation of an EU-backed reform granting religious minorities freedom of worship is being held up by bureaucratic obstacles, "Radikal" reports. A Presbyterian congregation in Ankara has applied to the Governor's office to open a house of worship, but official permission was denied. The problem was resolved only through the personal intervention of the Interior Minister. The EU assessment of serious bureaucratic obstacles with regard to the implementation of EU reforms is true, "Radikal" claims, stressing the need for Turkey to pass a separate law banning religious discrimination.

Unrest growing in SE Turkey: Peace in Turkey's Southeast is under threat, the Turkish daily "Birgun" reports. The paper points to 29 killings that occurred in the southeast over the last two months. Imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan had criticized the AK Party government for carrying out military operations in southeast Turkey without taking any step forward to solve the Kurdish problem. Ocalan had told the government that a war would begin unless something is done. The Tunceli Bar Association has warned against armed conflict, saying it would bring new pain for the people of the region people and damage all democratic steps taken forward on Turkey's path to the EU.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq/President's TV Speech

"US Intentions"

Hikmet Cetinkaya argued in the social democrat-opinion maker Cumhuriyet (5/27): "There are two important summits coming up, and it is no coincidence that the G-8 and NATO summits are scheduled for the same month. This has to do with US intentions for the future of Iraq and the region. Both the US and UK want to present Turkey as a model for the Greater Middle East project. The role being designed for Turkey in that context is that of a 'moderate Islamic' country. The US and UK are ready to ignore Turkey's secular democratic system, because a moderate Islamic model works better for their interests in this region."

"Bush's Remarks are Still Threatening"

Fuat Bol wrote in the conservative Turkiye (5/27): "President Bush made his eagerly awaited speech, yet he continues to mix threatening remarks with the facts. The President underlined that the fight against terrorism is not a war of choice for the US, but one that was foisted upon the US. He reiterated that it is time to take action, not to talk. . The purpose of his remarks is to convince the international public about the need for the ongoing war on terrorism and to call on friends and allies to side with the US. However, the truth is that every backward or cruel regime in the Middle East, including the Taliban and Saddam, used to enjoy US support. Their tyranny was made possible by military and political support from Washington. . The current situation does not give us hope for a better future. After the US occupation, Iraq is living in pain and agony. Moreover, the misguided US policies in Iraq have helped to fuel more hatred and vengeance that will increase threats to the future of Iraq and the wider region. None of this is going to bring peace and democracy to the region."

EDELMAN